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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/763,719	01/23/2004	Thomas Zdeblick	MSDI-200/PC261.21	7326
52196	7590	02/01/2008		
KRIEG DEVAULT LLP ONE INDIANA SQUARE, SUITE 2800 INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204-2709			EXAMINER STEWART, ALVIN J	
			ART UNIT 3774	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 02/01/2008	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/763,719

Applicant(s)

ZDEBLICK ET AL.

Examiner

Alvin J. Stewart

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 October 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 15-23, 39-43, 45-47, 49-52, 54, 55, 65, 67 and 71 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 39 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 15-23, 41-43, 51, 52, 65 and 67 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 40, 45-47, 49, 50, 54, 55 and 71 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 10/17/07 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

The new limitations entered in the independent rejected claims do not place the case in condition for allowance. The new limitations "said elongated driver shaft rigidly connected to the distraction device" do not add any structure limitation to the claims and not even differentiate the application to the prior art. For example, the meaning of the word "rigidly" in the Merriam-Webster dictionary is: ---precise and accurate in procedure; firmly inflexible---. Therefore, the Doty reference clearly discloses an elongated driver shaft having a precise and accurate connection to the distraction device. Regarding claim 54, see Figs. 4 & 5 disclosing a rounded leading end portion.

NOTE: claim 39 has been withdrawn because it depends on a canceled claim 44.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 45-47, 49-50, 54, 55 and 71 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Doty US Patent 4,599,086

Doty discloses an elongated stem (12) having a height, a first end, a second end, a longitudinal axis and a flange (66, upper section) extending outward from the stem and a

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transverse stop element (66, lower end). An elongated driver shaft (32) extending generally along the axis and sized to extend outside of the intervertebral space. The shaft is capable of applying an external force to the implant to transmit an axial force (see Figs. 5 & 6).

Expressions relating the apparatus to contents thereof during an intended operation are of no significance in determining patentability of the apparatus claim. *Ex parte Thibault*, 164 USPQ 666, 667 (Bd. App. 1969).

Claims are being treated as product by process claims. In accordance with MPEP 2113, these claims are not limited to the manipulations of the recited steps, only the structure implied by the steps.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 40 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Doty US Patent 4,599,086 in view of Ray US Patent 6,042,582.

Doty discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Doty does not disclose a plurality of ridges.

Ray teaches an implant comprising a plurality of ridges for the purpose of increasing the surface area contact with the end plates and to facilitate retention between adjacent vertebrae (see col. 8, lines 54-63).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the Doty reference with the Ray reference in order to increase the surface area of the implant and to facilitate retention between adjacent vertebrae.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 15-23, 41-43, 51, 52, 65 and 67 are allowed.

Claim 54 and 55 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alvin J. Stewart whose telephone number is 571-272-4760. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:00AM-5:30PM(1 Friday B-week off).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott can be reached on 571-272-4754. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

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A. Stewart

**ALVIN J. STEWART
PRIMARY EXAMINER**

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January 24, 2008.